

How C.I.A. Put an 'Instant Air Force' Into Congo, to Carry Out United States Policy

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Intervention, Invasion, Spying All in a Day's Work

Following is the second of five articles on the Central Intelligence Agency. The articles are by a team of New York Times correspondents consisting of Tom Wicker, John W. Finney, Max Frankel, E. W. Kenworthy and other members of The Times staff.

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At the Ituri River, eight miles south of Nia Nia in the north-east Congo, a government column of 600 Congolese troops and 100 white mercenaries had been ambushed by a rebel force and was under heavy fire. Suddenly, three B-26's skimmed in over the rain forest and bombed and strafed a path through the rebel ranks for the forces supported by the United States.

At the controls of the American-made planes were anti-Castro Cubans, veterans of the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961, three years before. They had been recruited by a purportedly private company in Florida. Servicing their planes were European mechanics solicited through advertisements in London newspapers. Guiding them into action were American "diplomats" and other officials in apparently civilian positions.

The sponsor, paymaster and director of all of them, however, was the Central Intelligence Agency, with headquarters in

Langley, Va. Its rapid and effective provision of an "instant air force" in the Congo was the climax of the agency's deep involvement there.

The C.I.A.'s operation in the Congo was at all times responsible to and welcomed by the policy-makers of the United States.

It was these policy-makers who chose to make the agency the instrument of political and military intervention in another nation's affairs, for in five years of strenuous diplomatic effort it was only in Langley that the White House, the State Department and the Pentagon found the peculiar combination of talents necessary to block the creation of a pro-Communist regime, recruit the leaders for a pro-American government and supply the advice and support to enable that government to survive.

From wire-tapping to influencing elections, from bridge-blowing to armed invasions, in the dark and in the light, the Central Intelligence Agency has become a vital instrument of American policy and a major component of American government.

It not only gathers information but also rebuts an adversary's information. It not only organizes its own far-flung operations but also re-

sists an adversary's operation.

Against the Soviet Union alone, it performs not only certain of the services performed in Moscow by the K.G.B., the Committee for State Security, but also many of the political, intelligence and military services performed by pro-Soviet Communist parties around the world.

When the Communist and Western worlds began to wrestle for control of the vast, undeveloped Congo in 1960 after it had gained independence from Belgium, a modest little C.I.A. office in Leopoldville mushroomed overnight into a virtual embassy and miniature war department.

This was not to compete with the real United States Embassy and military attachés but to apply the secret, or at least discreet, capacities of the C.I.A. to a seething contest among many conflicting forces.

Starting almost from scratch, because the Belgians had forbidden Americans even to meet with Congolese officials, the C.I.A. dispersed its agents to learn Congolese politics from the bush on up, to recruit likely leaders and to finance their bids for power.

Capable of quickly gathering information from all sources, of buying informants and disburs-

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